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**BOOK REVIEW**

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## **Lilian M. Azzopardi (Ed), Further MCQs in Pharmacy Practice**

**Pharmaceutical Press, London, 2006, £ 19.95, ISBN 0 85369 665 9**

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This book is an extension of an earlier publication, edited by the same author and published in 2003. Both books contain multiple choice questions (MCQs) that challenge the knowledge of pharmacists in various ways. The open-book section and the provision of explanations to the answers will help readers (pre-registration students as well as registered pharmacists) to identify areas of strength and weakness in their pharmacy knowledge.

For a pharmacist it is indeed fun to read through this book and test his or her knowledge. Would you for instance know if infant formula milk preparations (1) can be based on cow's milk (2) contain no fat or (3) are presented as separate components to be reconstituted before use (the right answer seems to be 1). Or would you know if wet skin lesions (1) indicate presence of a fungal infection, (2) always require referral or if (3) potassium permanganate soaks may be recommended? And lastly, what would you answer to the following options about Good Pharmacy Practice guidelines: (1) Have been established by the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), (2) comply with ISO9000, (3) consist of an audit process, (4) relate to

pharmaceutical marketing or (5) entail field observation studies. Not only students without practice experience might find it hard to come up with the right answers. However, there is no testing of skills in this book (obviously because skills can hardly be tested on paper), and therefore we must remember that good 'results' on these tests do not ensure that the pharmacist will be competent in his profession at all.

What is missing in this book is a definition of the knowledge-level that this book is supposed to test. In spite of the attempts of the European Association of Faculties of Pharmacy to harmonise the pharmacist education in Europe, there still are no common teaching goals, let alone common registration requirements in Europe. It also is not very clear in which country or countries the questions were originally generated and sometimes that might be relevant. And lastly, I personally am not in favour of using brand-names when testing pharmacists' knowledge. This latter aspect also makes the questions quite difficult to use in non-English speaking countries and is not in line with modern evidence based pharmacy.

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